

## Virginia Clinicians support plan to Reduce and Cap Carbon Dioxide from Fossil Fuel Fired Electric Power Generating Facilities (Rev. C17)

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A warming world poses significant risks to human health, from: extreme weather events; heat illness; air pollution; allergies; food and water contamination and infectious diseases. These effects are felt disproportionately in vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly and the disadvantaged. United States Federal Agencies including the U.S. Global Change Research Program (i), Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (ii), the Department of Defense (iii) the National Institutes of Health (iv) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (v) have issued reports and programs that address the health threats posed to humans by a changing climate.

Additionally, leading national medical organizations including the American College of Physicians (vi), American Academy of Pediatrics (vii), American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (viii), American Public Health Association (ix), and others (x) have published statements and resolutions recognizing the threat that the changing climate poses to human health and promoting physician engagement.

Health systems and hospitals in Virginia are vulnerable to extreme weather events and storm surges, which can significantly compromise patient safety and access to care, as vividly evidenced by effects of Superstorm Sandy and Hurricane Katrina on Neonatal Intensive Care Units (xii). Regions of coastal Virginia, some of which are sites of major military installations, are at high risk to sea level rise and storm surge associated with climate change (xiii, xiv).

Climate change is very likely affecting plant and animal species in Virginia (xv). For example, the date of peak tree pollen count has moved about one week earlier over the last 30 years and the peak pollen count has increased (Richmond Science Museum Data). Reported cases of several vector-borne diseases, including Lyme Disease, Ehrlichiosis/Anaplasmosis and Spotted fever riskettsiosis, increased by 2-14 fold between 2006-2015 in Virginia (xvi). Changes in the natural world ultimately affect the health, prosperity and quality of life of Virginians.

Summer heat is becoming more oppressive in Virginia and heat-related injury is a cause of illness and death in Virginians (xvii), with young athletes, outdoor workers and the elderly at particularly elevated risk. Between May and August of 2016, 1700 Virginians were treated in Emergency Rooms for heat illness.

For the reasons stated above, Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action ([virginiaclinicians.org](http://virginiaclinicians.org)), a coalition of over one hundred clinicians across the state of Virginia, supports the Governor's plan to Reduce and Cap Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Fuel Fired Electric Power Generating Facilities as protective of the public health.

- i. <https://health2016.globalchange.gov><<https://health2016.globalchange.gov/>>
- ii. <http://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/default.htm>
- iii. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27081888>
- iv. <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/geh/climatechange/>
- v. <https://toolkit.climate.gov/topics/human-health><<https://toolkit.climate.gov/topics/human-health/>>
- vi. <https://www.acponline.org/advocacy/advocacy-in-action/climate-change-toolkit>)
- vii. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/136/5/992>
- viii. <http://www.acog.org/Resources-And-Publications/Position-Statements/Climate-Change-and-Womens-Health>
- ix. <http://apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2015/12/03/15/34/public-health-opportunities-to-address-the-health-effects-of-climate-change>
- x. <http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/outdoor/climate-change/declaration-on-climate-change.html>
- xi. [http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736\(15\)60854-6.pdf](http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(15)60854-6.pdf)
- xii. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/139/5/e20170507>
- xiii. [http://sealevelrisevirginia.net/docs/homepage/CCC\\_Final\\_Report-Final\\_12152008.pdf](http://sealevelrisevirginia.net/docs/homepage/CCC_Final_Report-Final_12152008.pdf), accessed 7/26/16
- xiv. <https://naturalresources.virginia.gov/media/5081/vims-climate-audit.pdf>, accessed 7/26/16
- xv. [http://ccrm.vims.edu/climate\\_change/index.html](http://ccrm.vims.edu/climate_change/index.html)
- xvi. [http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2016/03/table2a\\_trend2015.pdf](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2016/03/table2a_trend2015.pdf)
- xvii. <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/news/public-relations-contacts/severe-weather-preparedness/extreme-heat-and-heat-related-illnesses/>, accessed 7/26/16